

11,000 feet above the Jordan valley, but upon one of the nearer, lower, summits of the foothills.

Time.—One week after the great confession, and near the close of the Galilean ministry. In the summer of A.D. 29, the year of Rome 782.

Another question of time arises. Was it by day or night? We have these data for answer.

1. Jesus was wont to withdraw to mountain

solitudes for prayer at nightfall.

2. During part of the scene the disciples were heavy with sleep.

3. It was 'next day' when they came down from the hill. Luke 9: 37.

It was, then, against the background of the night, and while the world was wrapped in sleep, his glory was revealed. Probably these two great days, seven days apart, were Sabbath.

NOTES ON THE TEXT.

1. Six days.—"The time and the occasion of this event, which are of the utmost importance to the right comprehension of it, are most definitely fixed in the opening words." Brown. Luke says 'about eight.' There is no discrepancy. Six had intervened; eight includes the two extremes. Statements of time thus agreeing in fact, though differing in form, are among the surest signs of veracity in historical narratives." Neander.

Peter, James, and John.—Jesus here acts upon the principle set forth in Acts 10: 14 'Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God.' Two or three witnesses were required by the law. Deut. 19: 15. There was no favoritism in the selection of some to see what others might not share. They were not fitted by faith to receive the disclosure. Already they were thus singled out, for they only had entered the death-chamber of the daughter of Jairus, and they were yet again to be alone with him in Gethsemane's awful hour.

'*Apart*' conveys the double idea of withdrawal from the rest, and into a solitary place. Luke adds that he went 'to pray,' "doubtless in connection with 'those sayings' since their reception required as much the direct teaching of the Father as had the previous confession of Peter, of which it was indeed the counterpart and twin-height."—Edersheim. As he prayed he was transfigured. So Moses' face shone while communing with God. And while Stephen looked up steadfastly into heaven, his face became as it were the face of an angel.

2.—Transfigured.—There are two words used in New Testament Greek to indicate a transformation. This, the stronger of the two, is

from *Morphe, form*, (who, being in the *form* of God—took upon him the *form* of a servant,) while the other is from *Schema, fashion*. The former is used of us in Rom. 12: 2. "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind," while the latter, and weaker, is used of Satan and his ministers in 2 Cor. 11. 'Transformed into an angel of light,' 'transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.'

Jesus had "originally the form of God, in which he appeared unto the inhabitants of heaven." This he laid aside, taking here the form of a servant. Now for a brief season the form of God lit up the servant's form. It was no reflection from without, as was the transient and unconscious brightness on the face of Moses. It was the shining forth of his own glory.

Before them.—Those words point out the purpose of the change. It was for their sake. 'Them' is emphatic in all three parts of the transaction. 'Transfigured before them.' 'There appeared unto them,' 'overshadowed them,' i.e. the disciples, for 'they feared as they entered into the cloud.'

There is a fine fitness in the two similes, "as the sun"—"as the light." His whole person emitted light, which flashed with dazzling brilliance from his face, and glowed with softer lustre from the robes of white he wore. The face was radiant, the garments irradiated.

3.—In all the narratives the appearance of Moses and Elijah is set forth as having reality and not as an apparition. This outward reality Peter long afterwards insists upon. 2 Pet. 1: 16-18. The disciples saw and heard them, understood their words, and knew that they were none other than Moses and Elijah. How they recognized them we are not told.